

connection between the tragic ending to her life and the earlier detention. Mrs. Abiola had been an outspoken critic of Gen. Sani Abacha's regime. For nearly 2 years, she had been working tirelessly—both in private and in public for the release of her husband. She had become a prominent individual in her own right, working to bring democracy to her country. Just last week, she met with John Shattuck, our Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights.

The assassination of this leading figure, following the executions last year of a group of human rights activists, including the renowned playwright, Ken Sara-Wiwa, has drawn international condemnation and rightly so. According to press reports, thousands of university students marched yesterday in Ibadan, joined by many others. Over 3,000 people attended Ms. Abiola's funeral yesterday, including representatives from a number of nations.

Mr. President, Nigeria is an important country in regional and international politics. It is the most populous country in Africa and an active member of many international bodies. Nigeria's fate is thus of great significance. It has the potential to become a major world trading partner and an influential member of the international community. Yet its leadership continues to squander this potential through this horrific behavior. The military regime of Gen. Sani Abacha continues to be associated with rampant corruption, brutal policies of repression and execution and severe economic mismanagement.

I spoke yesterday with the Nigerian Ambassador to the United States and communicated my own concern that the most recent assassination is a matter of grave concern and urged that his government conduct a full and transparent investigation of the circumstances leading to Mrs. Abiola's assassination and take steps to bring her murderers to justice.

The Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa, on which I serve as the ranking minority member, recently held a hearing on United States policy on Nigeria. As I said then, and as I have said many times on this floor, the track of decline and violence in Nigeria causes great pain and instability in all of Africa. The brutal assassinations and executions underscore this problem.

The situation in Nigeria today stands in stark contrast to the trend in many African countries toward pluralism, transparency, and constitutional guarantees of fundamental human rights. Nigeria continues to move in the opposite direction. The international community needs to send very strong messages that this course of action will make Nigeria an international pariah, shunned by all nations and all people committed to human rights and democracy.●

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR PRYOR

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, the first 8 years of my time as Republican leader coincided with the administrations of Republican Presidents. And one of my jobs as leader was to do everything I could to support the agenda of those Presidents.

Though Senator PRYOR is not the Democrat leader, he has made it his job the past 3 years to do everything he could to support President Clinton, his long-time friend and fellow Arkansan.

And no doubt about it, President Clinton could not have asked for a better friend than Senator PRYOR. While we have disagreed on many issues—especially over the last 3 years—I have admired his loyalty to the President.

I have also admired the special interest that Senator PRYOR has taken on issues of importance to senior citizens. When he was in the House of Representatives, he was the driving force behind the establishment of the Aging Committee, and has chaired that committee here in the Senate.

Senator PRYOR will also be remembered for his longstanding crusade against overly harsh enforcement methods of the Internal Revenue Service, and he is due a great deal of credit for the passage in 1988 of the taxpayers bill of rights.

I would close by saying to Senator PRYOR that it is my hope that come next January, I will have the privilege of having Senators who are as good of friends to a Dole administration as he has been to the Clinton administration.

TRIBUTE TO BILL BRADLEY

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, as I look back at my years in the Senate, one accomplishment of which I am very proud was the passage of tax reform legislation in 1986, when I was serving as Senate majority leader.

This bill was a very important first step in making our tax system fairer, flatter, and simpler. And one of the guiding forces behind its passage was Senator BILL BRADLEY of New Jersey.

Senator BRADLEY is retiring from the Senate at the end of this year, and he leaves behind a record of accomplishment and innovation.

From the future of Russia to international trade to the state of our cities, Senator BRADLEY has been in the forefront of debates, providing both leadership and original proposals.

Senator BRADLEY and I have not agreed on every issue over the years, but one matter on which we see eye-to-eye is the need to restore civility and a sense of decency to American society.

I have no doubt that Senator BRADLEY will continue to contribute a great deal to the debates of our time for many years to come.

Elizabeth joins with me in wishing all the best to Senator BRADLEY, and to his wife, Ernestine.

Senator Bradley has been a good friend. We have been on the Finance

Committee together. We have agreed on a lot of issues and, as I said earlier, disagreed on some. I think he has added a great deal of civility to this body, and I know he has a bright future as he leaves the Senate in whatever he may do in the private sector.

SENATOR BENNETT JOHNSTON

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, like many Members of this body, I learned a great deal about how to succeed in the Senate from our former colleague, Russell Long of Louisiana.

Senator Long knew this institution. He knew how to get things done. And he knew how to fight for the interests of his State. And during the 14 years they represented Louisiana together, Senator Long had a willing student and an effective partner in Senator J. BENNETT JOHNSTON.

And when Senator JOHNSTON leaves this Chamber at the end of the year, he will leave with a reputation as someone who knows the Senate, who knows how to get things done, and who knows how to fight for people of his State.

Energy, water development, agriculture, and national defense are all issues that matter to Louisiana, and they are matters that have been on the top of Senator JOHNSTON's agenda.

As Republican leader, I have appreciated Senator JOHNSTON's willingness to set partisanship aside, and to do what is best for America. His support of President Bush during the Persian Gulf War, his opposition to the Clinton tax increase, and his leadership in the effort to achieve true regulatory reform are three examples that come to mind.

I note that Senator JOHNSTON will celebrate his birthday next week, and I would say to him that he is still a very young man, and that he still has much to contribute to Louisiana and to America.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, let me indicate before I make any request here that I have had a phone discussion today with Senator DASCHLE, the Democratic leader. I hope there is still some way before I leave here on Tuesday that we can dispose of, if not all the nominees on the calendar, most of the nominees. It has never been my practice to hold up nominees because they have families; they have plans to make; they have moves to make.

I know that we are sort of caught in a crunch here because we have objections from both sides. And I did say on May 24, 1996, that I would be happy to call up these nominations one at a time. If we cannot agree on a package, if we cannot agree to do all or part, then it seems to me that we ought to—